



The University of Melbourne

Parkville, N.2.

Carlton, N.3

11th April 1960

VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

SDR.CM

Professor J. Lederberg,
Professor of Genetics,
Stanford University,
Palo Alto,
California, U.S.A.

Dear Josh,

Greetings from us all in Melbourne. Everything is going well here and each member of the staff seems to have some exciting new topic in research coming up. At last the University has come to a firm decision about our new building and we are hopeful now that we shall occupy it in February 1963. I must plan for a truly international opening and I hope you will be able to accept an invitation for about that time. I note that Esther will be talking in the Genetics Symposium in London about the time you receive this letter.

My main reason for writing is to tell you that Joan Gardner and I are in the middle of writing a small book on sterilization and disinfection. We desire to have this as comprehensive as possible and one comment we did want to make was on the problem of sterilization of interplanetary rockets. I am aware of your deep interest in the subject of life beyond this planet and I was wondering if you could give me some information on what steps, if any, are taken to sterilize the internal working mechanisms of rockets that are used for the moon shots. I assume that radiations and heat will destroy all surface contaminants but what about interiors? One fairly simple way would be to insert a charge of propylene oxide, each of which could diffuse as a gas inside the rocket. However, I would be grateful to have any comments from you on this point.

Ellen has completely recovered and is now quite well. The kids are growing up and seem to be doing reasonably well at University and school. I have been asked by Walsh McDermott to spend a year at

/Cornell...

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Cornell Medical School, New York, from September this year and I have tentatively accepted. The only trouble is that I shall not be able to stay the full year and am not particularly enamoured of the problem he suggested I should work on. We have made some rather interesting observations on the hospital infection problem and I have suggested that I might pursue these in New York. If this does come off we hope to see you some time towards the end of July.

Last Monday we had an interesting seminar with Dr. Hattie Alexander as our guest.

With warmest wishes from everyone on the staff and ourselves in particular,

Yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'J. Lederberg', written in a cursive style.